

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1        1. An image forming device comprising:  
2            an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium external  
3            of the image forming device;  
4            imaging circuitry configured to use an imaging consumable to form hard  
5            images;  
6            a sensor configured to monitor a status of the imaging consumable; and  
7            processing circuitry coupled with the sensor and configured to generate a  
8            message indicating the status of the imaging consumable and to synchronize with  
9            another image forming device to control a timing of a communication of the  
10          message externally of the image forming device using the interface.
- 1        2. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing  
2            circuitry is configured to detect a predetermined moment in time to synchronize  
3            with the another image forming device.
- 1        3. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the imaging circuitry  
2            is configured to print hard images upon media.
- 1        4. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the interface is  
2            adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-  
3            switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the  
4            message comprising an e-mail message.
- 1        5. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing  
2            circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a status message  
3            including one status.

1       6. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a composite message  
3 including a plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

1       7. An image forming device comprising:  
2           an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium external  
3           of the image forming device;  
4           imaging circuitry configured to use an imaging consumable to form hard  
5           images;  
6           a sensor configured to monitor a status of the imaging consumable; and  
7           processing circuitry coupled with the sensor and configured to generate a  
8           message indicating the status of the imaging consumable and to communicate the  
9           message externally of the image forming device using the interface at a  
10          predetermined moment in time.

1       8. The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the imaging circuitry  
2 is configured to print hard images upon media.

1       9. The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the interface is  
2 adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-  
3 switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the  
4 message comprising an e-mail message.

1       10. The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a composite message  
3 including a plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

1        11. An image forming device comprising:  
2            an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium;  
3            imaging circuitry configured to consume a plurality of imaging consumables  
4        to form hard images;  
5            a plurality of sensors configured to monitor respective statuses of the  
6        imaging consumables; and  
7            processing circuitry coupled with the sensors and configured to generate a  
8        composite message indicating statuses of the imaging consumables, and to forward  
9        the composite message to the interface for communication externally of the image  
10      forming device.

1        12. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the processing  
2        circuitry is configured to synchronize with another image forming device to control  
3        the timing of the communication of the composite message.

1        13. The device in accordance with claim 12 wherein the processing  
2        circuitry is configured to send the composite message at a predetermined moment  
3        in time to synchronize with the another image forming device.

1        14. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the imaging circuitry  
2        is configured to print hard images upon media.

1        15. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the interface is  
2        adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-  
3        switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the  
4        composite message comprising an e-mail message.

1        16. The device in accordance with claim 11 further comprising storage  
2        circuitry and the processing circuitry is configured to process signals from the  
3        sensors and to forward statuses responsive to the signals to the storage circuitry  
4        for storage.

1           17. A method of facilitating ordering of an imaging consumable  
2 comprising:  
3           providing an image forming device configured to use the imaging consumable  
4 to form hard images;  
5           monitoring a status of the imaging consumable;  
6           generating a message indicating the status of the imaging consumable  
7 responsive to the monitoring;  
8           synchronizing with another image forming device; and  
9           communicating the message externally of the image forming device  
10 responsive to the synchronizing.

1           18. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the synchronizing  
2 comprises detecting a predetermined moment in time.

1           19. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the providing  
2 comprises providing the image forming device configured to print hard images upon  
3 media.

1           20. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the communicating  
2 comprises communicating the message comprising an e-mail message.

1           21. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the generating  
2 comprises generating the message comprising a composite message including a  
3 plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

1           22. A method of facilitating ordering of an imaging consumable  
2 comprising:

3 providing an image forming device configured to use the imaging consumable  
4 to form hard images;

5 monitoring a status of the imaging consumable;

6 generating a message indicating the status of the imaging consumable  
7 responsive to the monitoring; and

8 communicating the message externally of the image forming device at a  
9 predetermined moment in time.

1           23. The method in accordance with claim 22 wherein the communicating  
2           comprises communicating the message comprising an e-mail message.

1        24. The method in accordance with claim 22 wherein the generating  
2        comprises generating the message comprising a composite message including a  
3        plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.